

TO THE COMMITTEE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION
OF 1892:

Your Executive Committee has instructed us to prepare and present to you a statement of the existing situation in Congress and in the State Legislature, as reported from the Committee on Legislation.

In December last, a bill prepared by the Committee on Legislation, providing for the holding of the World's Fair in New York City, was introduced in both Houses of Congress. Bills in the interests of Chicago, of St. Louis, and of Washington were also introduced, and Special Committees to consider the subject were appointed by the Senate and by the House.

On the 11th of January there was a public hearing at Washington, before the Senate Committee, which was attended by nearly one hundred leading citizens of New York. The reasons why the Fair should be held in New York were ably and forcibly presented; and, among other things, the Committee was assured that, in addition to the private subscription of over \$5,000,000, the City of New York was willing to expend \$10,000,000 in providing a site and buildings for the Fair.

On the same day, the first draft of a bill prepared by the Committee on Legislation for introduction in the New York Legislature, was given to the public through the New York newspapers. This bill was so framed as to authorize the expenditure of \$10,000,000 by the city, through the agency of a Board of Exhibition Commissioners named in the bill.

This bill was afterwards submitted to the heads of all the city departments, and was perfected in pursuance of suggestions from them, and from the Counsel to the Corporation, and from numerous other gentlemen familiar with similar legislation. It was introduced in both Houses of the Legislature on the 24th of January. It was

passed by the Assembly without amendment, but was amended in the Senate by the addition of twenty-two other names to the list of Exhibition Commissioners. The Assembly refused to concur in the amendment and a Conference Committee has been appointed which has not yet reported.

New York's hopes of favorable legislation in Congress depend upon the bill at Albany; and the bill at Albany depends upon an agreement between the Assembly and the Senate.

It is to consider the course which you, as representatives of the City of New York, should pursue, in view of this deadlock in the Legislature, that you are called together.

The twenty-two names, which a majority of the Senate seeks to insert in the bill, are chiefly Republican, and the addition of them is advocated upon the ground that a clear majority of known Republicans in the Board of Commissioners is necessary to prevent the management of the Fair in the interest of the Democratic party. On the other hand, the inclusion of these additional names is opposed upon the ground that the Commission, as it stood in the original bill, was a fair and non-partisan commission, and that to make it distinctly Republican upon party grounds, would justly alarm Democrats lest the management should be in the interest of the Republican party, and would therefore alienate Democratic support and be fatal to the enterprise.

The question presented, introduces into your deliberations for the first time considerations of party politics.

This great undertaking for the good of our city and of our country has been prosecuted thus far by you and by all of your committees, Democrats and Republicans alike, under a sense of public duty, for the public interest, and without a wish or a thought for partisan advantage.

The propriety of treating the Fair as a great industrial and educational enterprise, which is not to enter into politics and into which politics shall not enter, has been assumed, and this view needs no argument in its support.

The necessity of treating the Fair in this way is manifest from the situation in Congress.

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The Fair is to be international. It can be held only under the authority and the auspices of the Government of the United States.

The honor and the dignity of the whole American people must be officially pledged to its successful prosecution. Foreign governments will recognize it and foreign peoples will take part in it on no other terms.

Congress must declare where the Fair is to be held, and must, as it did in 1876, create a corporation to manage it.

In Congress, New York is engaged in a struggle with Chicago, with St. Louis and with Washington; each city claiming that it is the place where Congress should locate the Fair. The members of Congress are divided in their advocacy of all four cities, without respect to party lines.

The members from Illinois and the Northwest, both Republican and Democratic, favor Chicago. The members from Missouri and the Central Mississippi Valley, both Republican and Democratic, are in favor of St. Louis. Many Republicans and many Democrats advocate Washington as the site. That part of the country which from its location and business relations naturally favors the location of the Fair in New York, includes many Republicans and many Democrats. New York, to succeed, must have them substantially all. Both Republicans from the Eastern and Middle States and Democrats from the Southern States of the Atlantic seaboard, must vote for New York or she can have no reasonable hope that the Fair will be located here. If the Fair is to be a Republican machine, New York cannot expect the Democratic representatives from other States, whose support she must have, to vote in her favor. If the Fair is to be a Democratic machine, she cannot expect the Republican representatives from other States, whose support she must have, to vote in her favor. Absolute non-partisanship—the conduct of the enterprise, precisely as the affairs of a great business corporation would be conducted, is required, not merely by the fitness of things, not merely by the rights of the subscribers to the guarantee fund, who em-

brace all shades of political opinion, but by the necessary conditions of success in Congress.

In framing the bill now before the State Legislature the Committee on Legislation recognized these conditions. The natural way for the City of New York to expend ten millions of dollars in a great public work would be to expend it through the agency of the officers of the City Government elected by the people for the expenditure of municipal funds. But the Committee on Legislation did not deem it suitable to place the expenditure of the funds in Democratic hands, and the authorities of the city cheerfully acceded to their view.

The expenditure of the moneys of the city under the authority of the State might well have been entrusted to a commission, to be appointed by the Mayor of the city or by the Governor of the State. But the Mayor and the Governor were both Democrats, and, therefore, neither of those courses was adopted.

The legislation proposed in Congress by Chicago places this power in the hands of the Governor of Illinois, who is a Republican, and both Republicans and Democrats of Illinois are unanimous in its support.

The legislation proposed in Congress by St. Louis places this power in the hands of the Governor of Missouri, who is a Democrat, and both Democrats and Republicans heartily unite in its support.

But your Committee put the patriotism of the citizens of New York to no such test. They determined to make the non-partisanship and representative character of the managers of the enterprise certain by naming in the bill a body of citizens whose fitness for the precise work required, and whose superiority to partisan considerations, had been already attested by the universal voice of all citizens of all parties; and they named in the bill as Exhibition Commissioners the members of the four committees of twenty-five each, on Finance, on Site and Buildings, on Permanent Organization, and on Legislation, which had thus far conducted the enterprise.

The members of these Committees, one hundred in number, together with the Governor of the State, the Mayor of the city and your Secretary, are the 103 Commissioners named in the bill as passed by the Assembly; and it is against them that the charge of presumptive faithlessness to trust and perversion of official power to partisan purpose is made.

Those Committees were appointed by the Mayor of the city for the very work now in hand, on the authority given by you on the 25th of July last. The appointments were made public on the 10th of August, and met with universal approval.

The New York *Tribune* said of them :

“ The universal approbation with which the announcements have been received should be very gratifying to the Mayor, who deserves the warmest praise for the wisdom and the unselfish zeal for the success of the Fair in 1892, which governed his selections. No World’s Fair, we venture to say, was ever organized by a more distinguished and more representative body of men. The men chosen are so truly representative that there will be no question anywhere of the propriety of their selection.”

The *Mail and Express* said :

“ We congratulate the city, the country and Mayor Grant himself on the selections he has made of the four committees of twenty-five each, who are to shape the fortunes and control the location and general character of the Exposition of 1892. * * * The one hundred members of the Committee on Legislation, Site and Buildings, Permanent Organization and Finance, represent the great professions and pursuits and interests of the city. It is loosely estimated that these gentlemen in the aggregate are worth \$500,000,000, which is considerably under the mark, but it is more to the point that for the most part, the rich men on the committees:

“ are much more than representative men, in this respect.
 “ They are men of demonstrated capacity for organizing
 “ great financial operations and successes and have large
 “ followings of men who will support any enterprise in
 “ which the former are taking a leading part.

“ Wall street, the railroad interests, the real estate in-
 “ terests, the banks, the mercantile and shipping interests
 “ are all represented by our very foremost and strongest
 “ men.

“ So, too, the legal profession and political and official
 “ life are represented by men who have reached the
 “ heights of success. * * * The business men on the
 “ committees are actual leaders and will be able to control
 “ and support all the representative branches in which
 “ they are eminent. Politics do not show in the commit-
 “ tees, for the selections are manifestly, with a very few
 “ exceptions, made on other than political grounds.”

The New York *Press* said :

“ It would be easy to criticise Mayor Grant’s selections
 “ of members of the World’s Fair Committees on perman-
 “ ent organization, on finance, on legislation, and on site
 “ and buildings, by pointing out men who were not ap-
 “ pointed, who might well have been, and men who were
 “ appointed who need not have been, but the general ver-
 “ dict of intelligent citizens will be one of hearty com-
 “ mendation. Each Committee bristles with solid names.
 “ Each Committee contains plenty of men, of whom no
 “ New Yorker has to ask, Who are they? The personnel
 “ is such as to command confidence and to give assurance
 “ of energetic and far-sighted business methods, in every
 “ branch of the preparations.”

The New York *Times* said:

“ Mayor Grant has named a World’s Fair Committee
 “ that represents the city broadly, and well, in its civic
 “ amplitude and its varied industries. These one hundred
 “ men in a large measure have made the city what it is.

“ The business sagacity, the courage and energy, the
 “ judgment, good sense, cultivation of mind, and the
 “ hard work that have won for them the prominence
 “ which entitles them to a place upon the Committee,
 “ have won for the city also, its leadership among the
 “ cities in the new world. The best pledge of their
 “ success in the enterprise now committed to them, is to
 “ found in their success in private affairs. We may
 “ look with entire confidence to this large and repre-
 “ sentative body of citizens to organize and set in motion
 “ the project so wisely and expeditiously, as not only to
 “ satisfy the people of New York of their fitness to the
 “ task, but to give to a few other ambitious cities the as-
 “ surance they seem at present to lack, of the good faith
 “ and earnestness with which this community has taken
 “ hold of the business of getting up the Fair.”

The New York *Herald* said (August 11th):

“ Mayor Grant has appointed a Committee of one hun-
 “ dred representative citizens, to organize the international
 “ exposition, which is to be held here in 1892. * * All
 “ talk of rivalry on the part of other cities is idle now.
 “ New York has undertaken to carry out the great work,
 “ and it will be done in a way that will reflect honor upon
 “ the American nationality, and directly benefit every part
 “ of the country. * * The strong names that predomi-
 “ nate in the Committee are a guaranty that the met-
 “ ropolis means business.”

The New York *World* said:

“ In forming the four committees which will have
 “ charge of arrangements for the World’s Fair of 1892,
 “ the only serious difficulty encountered by the Mayor
 “ has been an embarrassment of riches. His problem has
 “ not been to find enough good men for the purpose, but
 “ rather the reverse.

“ This is a good augury at the outset. It not only in-
 “ dicates New York’s abundant ability to make the Fair

“ a grandly successful one, but her fixed determination
 “ to do so. It shows how deeply all classes of citizens are
 “ interested and how ready all are to respond to what-
 “ ever demand the occasion may make upon them.

“ With good management the history of this prelimin-
 “ ary work can be made to repeat itself in that which is
 “ to follow. The call for men representing the wealth,
 “ the industries, the intelligence and the public spirit of
 “ the city was responded to so generously that it was diffi-
 “ cult to choose so small a number as a hundred out of
 “ the multitude of available citizens. * * * The Com-
 “ mittee chosen is able to deal wisely with the problem of
 “ starting right. That is the only problem to be solved
 “ in the matter.”

The New York *Sun* said :

“ Mayor Grant has selected the four Committees for the
 “ organization of the great Exhibition with remarkable
 “ discretion. The 100 gentlemen composing them are
 “ truly representative, not only of New York, but of all
 “ America also.

“ Many of the names are known throughout the world as
 “ those of the greatest financiers and organizers of modern
 “ times. They are not men who enter into any undertak-
 “ ing inconsiderately, and they are not men who neglect
 “ any task with which they consent to be associated. If
 “ they go in at all, they go in for solid work.

“ The composition of these Committees also gives
 “ assurance to everybody that the World's Fair of 1892 is
 “ to be managed in its own interests solely. The talk
 “ of petty men about the possibility of its being run for
 “ selfish and individual purposes is brought to naught by
 “ the selections which the Mayor has made. These or-
 “ ganizers of the enterprise will not be affected by such
 “ considerations. They will perform a great public duty
 “ in a broad and comprehensive spirit. Nobody will
 “ doubt that.”

The same opinions were expressed in the other metro-

politan journals and by the press throughout the State irrespective of party. No public dissent, and, as far as we know, no private dissent, was ever heard. The same names were included as corporators in the bill introduced in Congress, which was made public early in December, and no one of any party dissented from their appointment. The same names were published in the first draft of the bill for the State Legislature on the 11th of January, and in that respect the bill which actually came before the Legislature a fortnight later remained precisely the same. During that fortnight not a word of objection was heard to the constitution of the Commission.

More than sixty of the hundred were appointed by the Mayor upon the nomination of the different trade and industrial organizations of the city, through the Chamber of Commerce and the Board of Trade and Transportation.

While we protest that any attempt to test the faithfulness to trust of such men, by inquiry into their political affiliations is an impertinence, yet, as the question has been raised, we have classified them, according to the best information which we are able to obtain, and we find that 46 are Republicans, 10 are Independents, professing allegiance to neither party, 2 are Labor men, and 42 are Democrats. Among the Democrats less than a dozen have any relation whatever to Tammany Hall; a larger number have been among the most persistent and bitter opponents of that organization, and many openly supported the Republican candidate for Governor in the last election. The Independents are nearly all active opponents of Tammany Hall.

That the interests of the Republican party cannot suffer from the Commission thus constituted, we have had, and still have, the public and private testimony of Chauncey M. Depew, who was the choice of the Republicans of New York for President, in the last National Convention; of Warner Miller, who was the last Republican candidate for Governor; of Cornelius N. Bliss, who was until a few months ago the Chairman of the Republican State Committee; of Alonzo B. Cornell, who was once

the Republican Governor of New York; of Joel B. Erhardt, who was the last Republican candidate for Mayor, and is now Collector of the Port, and of Elihu Root, who was lately the President of the Republican County Committee; and not one Republican of the City of New York has ever been heard to say a word to the contrary.

We now affirm for ourselves, and representing the expressed opinions of your Committee on Legislation and your Executive Committee, both Republicans and Democrats, that the Commission named in the original bill, as passed by the Assembly, is a fair, non-partisan and representative Commission; that it is by its constitution, and by the character of the men who compose it, absolutely incapable of perverting the great trust with which it would be invested to partisan purposes; and that it is by intelligence, experience in affairs and personal integrity beyond and above the reach of any partisan scheme.

We are satisfied that neither the Republican nor the Democratic members of that Commission would be willing to serve as members of a body devoted to the purposes of either party.

We are of the opinion that to change the Commission thus constituted from a non-partisan to a Republican Commission, would be a violation of the rights of the citizens of New York who have contributed their money and their efforts to this enterprise without respect to party, would be a violation of the principles upon which the enterprise ought to be conducted, and would and should be fatal to New York's prospects of success in obtaining the necessary legislation by Congress.

We think that if the people of New York are satisfied with the conduct of the men who have represented them thus far and who have lifted the enterprise above the plane of partisan politics; if the people consider that these men fitly represent them, and wish that representation and that method of transacting their business to continue, they should now express their wish through you, and call upon the Legislature of the State to permit them to ex-

pend their own money for their own purposes through the agents of their own selection.

It may well be that the true facts have been misrepresented to members of the Legislature, that the differences which exist in that body may have resulted, in a great measure, from misapprehension, and that a clear and unmistakable expression of the opinions and wishes of the people of the city, may produce harmony in Albany and meet with ready acquiescence.

This Committee have in their deliberations approached the subject intrusted to them, impressed with the gravity of the situation with which they were called upon to deal, and with every disposition to do all in their power to relieve the existing situation of affairs.

The fullest consideration of the matter has resulted in the firm conviction that to depart from the safe line upon which the enterprise has thus far proceeded, not only would not advance the prospect of success, but would result in absolute and merited failure.

Respectfully submitted,

ELIHU ROOT.

WILLIAM W. ASTOR.

CHARLES A. MOORE.

WILLIAM C. WHITNEY.

JOHN M. BOWERS.

